

OCT 10 2001

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1 MR. HELMER: My name is Bill Helmer, I work
2 in the environmental office for the Timbisha Shoshone
3 Tribe, and these are comments, staff comments. And
4 they will be followed later before the October 19th
5 deadline, tribal resolution about the Yucca Mountain
6 Project. Especially the Preliminary Site Suitability
7 Evaluation. So I just have a few comments here.

8 There's a time limitation. Just read a few excerpts.

9 MODERATOR BROWN: Please, go ahead.

10 MR. HELMER: As has been stated before, the
11 Yucca Mountain Project is illegally being proposed on
12 Western Shoshone lands without Western Shoshone
13 approval. This is a violation of the Treaty of Ruby
14 Valley, and tribal sovereignty. In addition, the
15 Western Shoshone National Council of which the Timbisha
16 Shoshone Tribe is a member, declared in 1995 that all
17 Western Shoshone lands were a nuclear-free zone, thus
18 barring the storage, use or disposal of all radioactive
19 materials.

20 It is the responsibility of the Western
21 Shoshone of this generation to protect future
22 generations, not poison them. And I go on in the

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23 letter to make comments about what other people have

24 said that this is a Preliminary Site Suitability

25 Evaluation, with proposed guidelines, and so this is

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1 very ridiculous to make, to have such uncompleted

2 documents to make comments upon. And so one of the --

3 so -- I go on to say, the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe

4 strongly recommends that the Yucca Mountain Preliminary

5 Site Suitability Evaluation be revised and finalized

6 according to the final guidelines of 10 CFR 963. At

7 that point, a public comment period should be initiated

8 on a final evaluation, and using final guidelines.

9 Like the state of Nevada, many other

10 governmental units, organizations and individuals, the

11 Timbisha Shoshone Tribe submitted comments regarding

12 the proposed guidelines in February of 2000. The tribe

13 recommended that the proposed guidelines retain the

14 stricter guidelines found in 10 CFR 960. So the

15 comments that we submitted to the state of Nevada,

16 others submitted, what's happening to those comments

17 that are supposed to be put into the revised

18 guidelines? So unless they are completely ignoring

19 those comments, could that be? The Timbisha Shoshone

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20 Tribe strongly recommends that the final Yucca Mountain
21 Site suitability evaluation revised according to the
22 final guidelines of 10 CFR 963 be available for public
23 comment after the final EIS for Yucca Mountain Project
24 is completed. Since much information will be presented
25 for the first time, it is recommended that a six-month
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1 comment period be initiated. In addition, public
2 hearings should be held in all the places across the
3 country where hearings were held for the draft EIS.
4 (APPLAUSE)

5 Extremely inadequate notice was given for
6 the, quote, extended public hearings. For example,
7 five days notice for the hearing at Independence. I
8 was told by the one person -- one person from the
9 public showed up. Nobody knew about the hearing.
10 Proper and timely notice must be given for public
11 input. The unresolved dangers of the Yucca Mountain
12 Project demand that the DOE listen and respond to the
13 concerns of tribes and others who may know much more
14 than DOE about the full meaning of site suitability.
15 If the ancestors of the Timbisha Shoshone have left
16 such a poison for future generations, we probably would

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17 be dead, or not able to live here any more. The
18 ancestors would never do this. And the Timbisha
19 Shoshone Tribe of today will never approve the
20 desecration of this land for future generations. The
21 site suitability evaluation is supposedly for 10,000
22 years. There must be no politically motivated rush to
23 push through the relocation of a poison that you still
24 don't understand, don't know what to do with, but
25 continually reproduce. Common sense alone demands that
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1 this madness be stopped.

2 MODERATOR BROWN: About one left.

3 MR. HELMER: Okay. Also, the Timbisha
4 Shoshone Tribe in April 16th, 2001, applied for
5 affected tribe status. To date, there has been no
6 response from the Department of the Interior regarding
7 this decision. This would grant like the state of
8 Nevada and counties monies in order to analyze the huge
9 amount of documents that are released to the public and
10 tribes and others, completely unedited, raw, scientific
11 data reports, you have to wade through in order to find
12 out what they're getting at. And we have also
13 repeatedly requested that these documents be put in a

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14 clear, concise, presentable form, and that has been
15 repeatedly ignored.

16 In conclusion, the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
17 will be directly affected by the proposed Yucca
18 Mountain Project. Since the Furnace Creek parcel of
19 the tribe is downgradient from the ground water of
20 Yucca Mountain, the predicted radionuclide leakage will
21 eventually reach the Timbisha Shoshone. Also, the
22 proposed Carlin-Caliente-Bonnie Claire rail corridor
23 alignment for the transport of high-level nuclear waste
24 by Scottie's junction to the Timbisha Shoshone of
25 Nevada. If built, the proposed Yucca Mountain Project
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1 would adversely affect future members of the Timbisha
2 Shoshone Tribe, as well as all living things at the
3 site vicinity and along the proposed transportation
4 corridors. Nothing presented in the Yucca Mountain
5 Preliminary Site Suitability Evaluation or any of the
6 other DOE documents justifies the site suitability of
7 the Yucca Mountain for the storage of high-level
8 nuclear waste. It is apparent that the DOE doesn't
9 know the true meaning of site suitability. Thank you.